

What is Peace?

Christian Dokuritsu Gakuen Christmas Commemorative Lecture

Hiroshi Suzuki

International Christian University

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Hymn 98 (Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)

- 1 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of His will,"
Hearing the song of praise from the angels, let us all rejoice together,
Praise the King, born this very day!
- 2 At the appointed time of salvation, He left His heavenly throne and
descended,
Dwelling in a humble virgin, to live among the people of the world,
Praise the King, born this very day!
- 3 Rising and shining like the morning sun, lighting the darkness with His
radiance,
To bring life to those from the earth and give eternal life,
Praise the King, born this very day!

Hymn 228 (Galilee no Kaze Kaoru)

- ① Near where the breeze of Galilee fragrant blows, saying "The Kingdom of Heaven is near,"
How many thousands of years since then? Come, O Lord, Your Kingdom come.
- ② In days of battle, in nights of rest, the fervent prayers longing for the Kingdom,
How many thousands of times offered? Come, O Lord, Your Kingdom come.
- ③ May hatred and strife cease to exist, and love and peace overflow everywhere,
On what day shall Your will be done? Come, O Lord, Your Kingdom come.

Mark 4:35–4:41 (New Interconfessional Translation)

4:35 That day when evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Mark 5:1–5:21 (Part 1)

5:1 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. 2 When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. 3 This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. 4 For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. 6 When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. 7 He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" 8 For Jesus had been saying to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" 9 Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." 10 And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. 11 A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12 The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them."

Mark 5:1–5:21 (Part 2)

14 Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. 15 When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. 16 Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. 17 Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. 18 As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. 19 Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." 20 So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed. 21 When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake.

Hiroshi Suzuki (Professor Emeritus, ICU)

- Taught Mathematics and Data Science at University.
- Supported students with difficulties and led Service-Learning.
- Held weekly Bible study groups at on-campus housing.
- Retired in March 2019 at age 65.
- Board member at "Nozomi no Ie" (Children's Home).
- Board member at Japan Christian Service (Employment support for the disabled).
- Board member at Keiwa Gakuen in Niigata.

Memories of Christmas

From a Christmas Pageant at Church School

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14 (KJV/Colloquial)

Glory to God, Peace on Earth

What exactly is "peace"?
Is it peace simply when there is no war?

High School Days

Campus Unrest & Turning to the Church

Autumn of 10th grade: Campus unrest began.
Some students barricaded the Principal's office.
Daily debates on political issues followed.
Riot police entered; no classes for several months.

Questions

- A. Under what conditions does one decide to break the law to protest injustice?
- B. What if I had been born into a Muslim or Communist family?

High School Days (Continued)

Active Church Participation

- Interacting with college students expanded my world.
- The pastor had served as a missionary in Southeast Asia during the war.
- Post-war, he established a dormitory for SE Asian students as an “act of atonement,” inviting orphans and children of Japanese soldiers for study and training.

Words of Pastor Ryoichi Kato

“I want Japanese youth not to exhaust their energy in confusion, but to see Southeast Asia firsthand and have opportunities for direct exchange for the sake of the next era.”

At Honmoku Pier, Yokohama



53-Day Cargo Ship Journey Through SE Asia



Living Together with the People of Asia

People I Encountered

- Many older people harbored hatred/dislike toward the Japanese.
- Many were envious of Japan's economic development.
- Everyone was living in extreme poverty.
- Children trying to earn money in various ways.
- Young women forced into sex work to survive.

Feeling War Responsibility

- It is essential to live responsibly as those inhabiting the same time together.
- Even in different worlds, I will remember these people and live in a way I am not ashamed of before them.

Subsequent Journey of Living Together

Study Abroad and Career

- Studied in the U.S. for about 3 years during graduate school.
- 13 years at a regional national university after returning.

International Christian University (ICU)

- Mathematics research and education.
- Supporting math research in Asian universities (Philippines, China).
- Student learning support and disability support.
- Work camps in hill tribe villages in Thailand.
- Service-Learning: Sending students to China, Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Kenya, etc.
- Discussion-style Bible study groups.
- Child welfare facilities.

Mark 4:35-41 Calming the Storm

(Scripture text as translated in previous frames...)

- 1 In what kind of situation did this occur?
- 2 Who was present at the scene?
- 3 What do we know about the boat?
- 4 How is the storm described?
- 5 How do the disciples react?
- 6 How is Jesus portrayed?
- 7 What is the final result?

Peace (1)

What is Peace?

- Disciples were not at peace in the storm ⇒ Sudden peace arrived?
- What changed it? A single word from Jesus?
- Was it that they didn't need to fear if they had faith?
- Could it be that this boat was "in peace" from the beginning?

What do you think?

Jesus' Presence = "God with us"?

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). (Matthew 1:23)

Does it mean we are safe simply by being with Jesus?

Healing the Man with Impure Spirits

Mark 5:1-21 Healing the Gerasene Demoniac

(Scripture text as translated in previous frames...)

- 1 When and in what context did this happen?
- 2 Who was present at the scene?
- 3 How is the person possessed by evil spirits described?
- 4 How is the interaction between Jesus and this person recorded?
- 5 What happens as a result?
- 6 What do the pig herders and the people from the town and countryside do?
- 7 What is written about the person who had been possessed by evil spirits?

Healing the Man with Impure Spirits

Peace (2)

- Townspeople were in a “peaceful” (?) state ⇒ terrified. Not at peace?
- What about the pig herders?
- The man with impure spirits was not at peace ⇒ moved to peace.
 - Sitting there, dressed and in his right mind.
 - The man begged to go with Jesus (18).
 - Jesus: “Go home... tell them how much the Lord has done for you.”
 - The man told everyone in the Decapolis what Jesus had done.

What do you think?

Key Teachings of Jesus

Jesus' First Proclamation

Mark 1:14–15

“The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

The First Commandment

Mark 12:28–31

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart... Love your neighbor as yourself.”

The New Commandment

John 13:34–35

“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

Summary: Seeking Peace

The Kingdom of God is Near

The world where God's will is done is right there!

The Greatest Commandment

To treasure those precious to you is to treasure the people precious to them.

The New Commandment

As loved ones, treasuring each other and seeking peace?

"One another" may not be easy.

In Closing

What is Peace?

I asked Gemini (AI)

<https://gemini.google.com/share/268c656eef7d>

Learning about Peace

- Thinking for oneself with questions.
- Avoiding division?
- Continuing to seek God's will.
- Treasuring the people precious to those you treasure.
- Accepting you are loved and loving one another.

What do you think? How will you seek peace?

Thank You for Listening!

Translated using AI, Google Gemini.